

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 and 12-24 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 8-10 and 12 are amended and claims 13-24 are added. Claim 11 has been canceled. Claim 1 has been amended to overcome a 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph rejection. Claims 8-10 have been amended to conform the method steps to U.S. patent practice. Claim 12 has been amended to more clearly distinguish over Chia.

No new matter has been added by this Amendment. Support for the language added to claim 1 can be found, for example, at page 4, lines 14 and 15 and paragraph 19 of the specification. Support for claims 12-14 can be found, for example, in paragraphs 16, 17 and 19 of the specification. Support for new claim 15 can be found on page 5, line 2 through page 6, line 10 of the specification. Support for new claims 16-23 can be found in original claims 2-9. Support for new claim 24 can be found in the original specification at, for example, page 4, line 24 - page 5, line 10.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant notes with appreciation that claims 8-10 are allowable.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

Claims 1-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. In particular, the Patent Office alleged that no positive active method steps were recited in claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant has amended claim 1 to more positively recite the method steps.

Applicant submits this rejection is now moot and claims 1-7 are now allowable.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are thus respectfully submitted.

III. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

A. JP '456

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by JP 06-107456 ("JP '456"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As claim 11 has been canceled, Applicant submits that this rejection is now moot.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully submitted.

B. Chia

Claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,298,470 ("Chia"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Chia teaches a sintered silicon carbide ceramic body which was initially densified by the interaction of various sintering additives, aluminum nitride being one of many. See column 4, lines 12-25 of Chia. Chia does not teach or suggest a shaped body for a sintered body of yttrium-aluminum garnet, the shaped body comprising a sintering aid comprising only aluminum nitride as recited in claim 12.

Therefore, Applicant submits that claim 12 is patentable over Chia. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are thus respectfully requested.

IV. Claim 15

New claim 15 is not taught or suggested by JP '456 or Chia, either in combination or alone. Neither JP '456 nor Chia teaches or suggest a method comprising mixing a source compound for yttrium and a source compound for aluminum to produce a mixture; calcining the mixture to generate yttrium-aluminum garnet; introducing aluminum nitride to the yttrium-aluminum garnet; and sintering the mixture of the aluminum nitride and yttrium-aluminum garnet to produce a sintered body of yttrium-aluminum garnet as recited in claim 15.

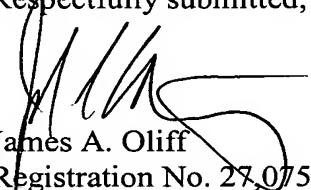
Thus, Applicant submits that claim 15 and dependent claims 16-24 are patentable over JP '456 and Chia.

V. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-10 and 12-24 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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